RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

March 2006

Socio-economic Series 06-002

THE RUTLAND TRANSIT CENTRE DESIGN WORKSHOP - KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

INTRODUCTION

Upon completion of the "Central Okanagan Smart Transit Plan" (IBI Group, December 2003), the City of Kelowna approached Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to assist with a community-based design workshop to assess preferred sites and development implications for one of the required transit exchanges identified in the plan.

The event—the Rutland Transit Centre Design Workshop—was subsequently held in Kelowna's Rutland community from the evening of Tuesday, June 21st through to the afternoon of Thursday, June 23rd, 2005.

WORKSHOP BACKGROUND/PREPARATION

While the Rutland community generally was more interested in longer term issues of community building, the City of Kelowna had an immediate and specific requirement to analyze community input and preference regarding the relatively technical requirement of the preferred location for the proposed Rutland Transit Exchange.

Thus the workshop had two mandates:

1) to help define the heart of the envisioned Rutland Transit Village;

2) to identify the preferred location for the Rutland Transit Exchange.

Based on these mandates the specific workshop goals noted below were identified through a series of conference calls between CMHC, City staff and IBI (who were acting as both workshop organizers and consultants to the City) over a period of six weeks

- locate the preferred site for the Rutland BRT Transit Exchange, in both the short and long term
- locate the preferred boundaries of the first tier "Transit Village"
- locate the candidate retail "High Street" to anchor the Transit Village

These calls also structured the agenda and identified approximately 50 local representatives from the Rutland business, consulting, professional, development and residential communities to participate.

WORKSHOP FORMAT/CONTENT/OUTPUT

The event spanned one evening and two short days and was held in a community venue located in the heart of the subject neighbourhood.

The first evening consisted of introductions and presentations on the future U.B.C. Okanagan campus which could heavily influence the development of this neighbourhood, the charrette process and transit oriented development principles and examples.

Day One

Participants were structured into three teams to separately discuss issues and articulate their vision for the proposed Rutland centre. Each of the facilitated teams was provided with a professional scribe to record the full dialogue as well as reference maps and photo inventories. All teams also walked the immediately adjacent site during this period.

At the end of the day, all three teams reconvened to share thoughts and results.

Canada

CMHC SCHL
HOME TO CANADIANS

Summary of Day One

Discussion amongst team members was broad and varied but subsequent full group discussion identified a number of commonalities. These commonalities helped develop a better understanding of neighbourhood features, personality, concerns, opportunities, aspirations and priorities for future development.

Some of the common issues which surfaced were:

The divisive nature of Highway 33 and the need to deal with it in some manner.

The need to attract and retain people, including passing tourists.

The need for a stronger community focal point or neighbourhood centre.

The desire to reflect the agricultural heritage and green aspects of the setting.

The desire to identify the gateways into Rutland and to identify Rutland as a gateway to Kelowna.

The desire/intent to maintain Rutland primarily as a residential community while ensuring it provided full amenities for a complete, high quality lifestyle.

While there was general agreement on these issues, there was a range of opinion on details such as where the centre and transit stop should be, what precisely constituted a town or neighbourhood centre and so forth.

Day Two extended the previous nights dialogue with each team interpreting it for themselves. By early morning, team dialogue shifted to the development of preferred solutions for the transit exchange and in recording these solutions in both written and graphic form.

All solutions were presented to the whole group in the early afternoon.

Orange Team Scheme

A. Fundamentals

Build on multi-cultural and farming roots

Encourage safe and healthy living

Support family and senior needs

Respect and conserve ecological resources

Create a destination for community activities and a gateway for "outdoor adventure"

B. Strategy for Highway 33

Presently serves as a link, but not a destination

Proposed "Rutland bypass" a tunnel highway beneath a pedestrian oriented plaza /high street

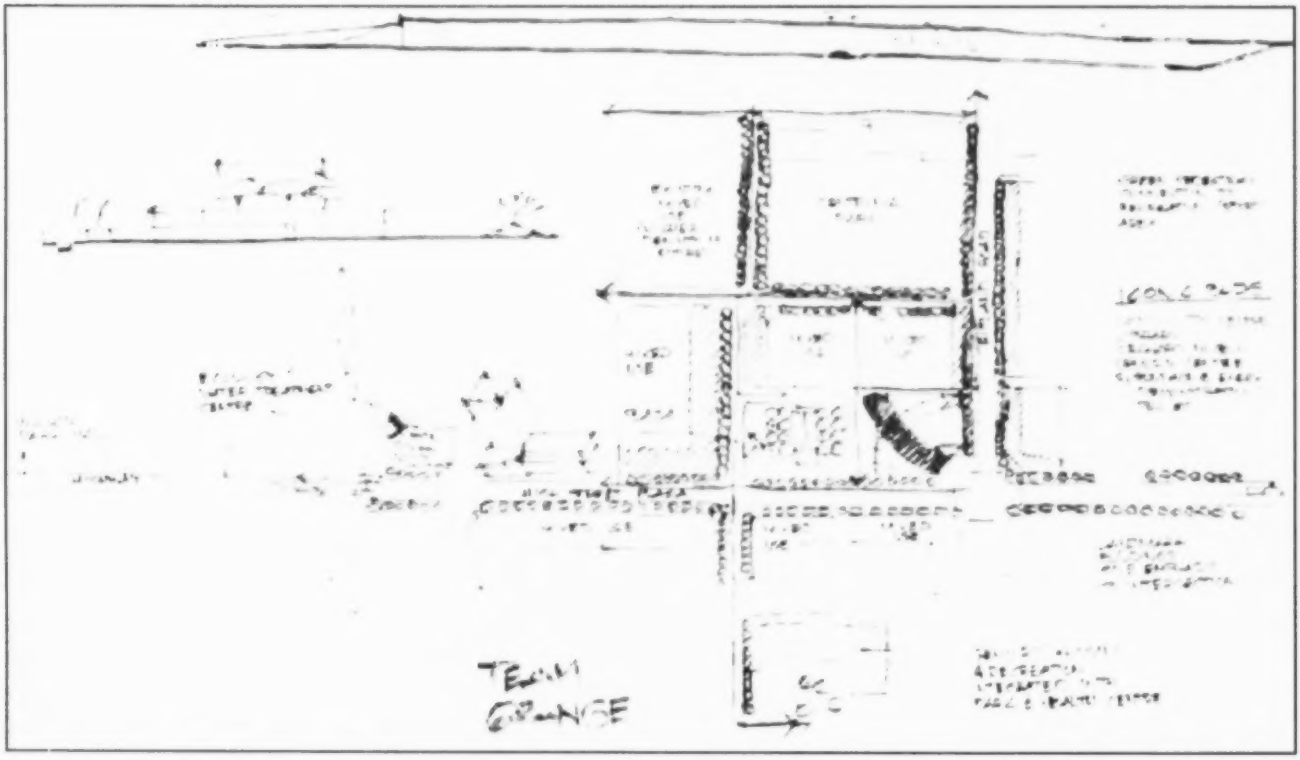

Figure A: Orange Team Scheme

C. Development Precincts

Four corners as natural and historic location

Creating landmark buildings at the intersection of Highway 33 and Rutland to create a physical gateway

Creating a civic precinct—community centre library, museum, senior centre—improved pedestrian access between parks and town centre

Site for community festival and attraction

D. Transportation

Diverting through traffic via a tunnel

Calming local traffic

Transit centre located near Roxby

E. Environment

Integrating environmental/sustainable awareness with town centre—Encouraging use of renewable resources.

Ecology and water treatment centre proposed along embankment

Figure B: Blue Team Scheme

Blue Team Scheme

A. Fundamentals

"Full" community—"Lifestyle" attraction

Building connections

Creating a social, cultural and local business centre

Making a much needed node or focal point for the community

B. Strategy for Highway 33

Not preferred location for Town Centre

Slow traffic through design

Cannot serve as a city road or main street

Live with through traffic rather than support bypass

Potential for sustainable energy demonstration project

C. Development Precinct

Create a town centre and high street along Dougall

Transit station at core of the centre

Proposed mid-rise buildings (with potential for high rise?)

Mixed use buildings—retail, office and residential

Using pedestrian greenways radiating from proposed town centre to connect local parks and open space

D. Transportation

Short-term transit exchange along Highway 33 near Dougall

Long-term station in turn-around off Dougall phased in over time

Locate at the heart of town centre—ease of access, catalyst for development

E. Environment

Creating greenway connections between area parks and linking with town centre

Potential for demonstration sustainability centre built along escarpment/transit centre

Creating connections with the University/sustainability

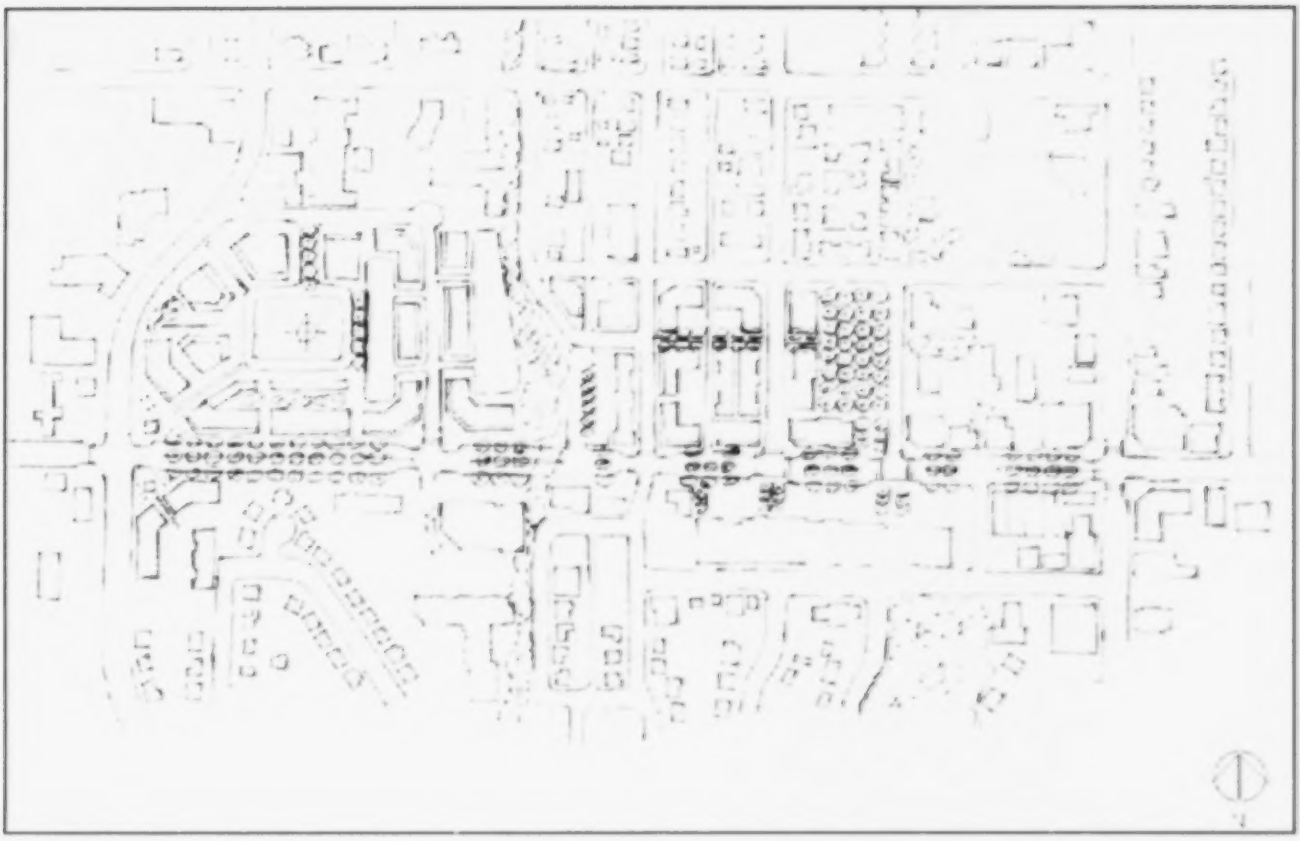

Figure C: Green Team Scheme

Green Team Scheme

A. Fundamentals

Principles of TOD, sustainability

Strategy for Highway 33

Distinct development precinct

Transit centre as hub

Escarpment centre of greenway

Community connections

Centre for Sustainability/Regional Demonstration Orchard

B. Strategy for Highway 33

Not preferred location for town centre

Beautification/Greening

On-street parking vs bicycle lane

Traffic Calming/CSD (secondary)

Gateway feature at Highway 33 and Hollywood /Rutland

Live with through traffic rather than support bypass

C. Development Precincts

Town Centre

The "Heart of Rutland "

Optimal location north of Highway 33, between Hollywood Road and escarpment

Larger land assemblies easier to develop

Mid- to high-density/mixed use (33, 66 to 110 upa) mixed-use equals retail, office and residential

Public realm institutional, i.e. library, community policing

Village "Common" plaza

Heritage Interpretive Program—i.e . water flume

Anchored by high street

High Street

On-street parking in rear and or underground (water table ?)

Retail at grade, three floors or office above shop

Compression of retail profile, i.e. sidewalk, parking, plus two lanes of traffic

Sidewalks wide enough for patio restaurants, sidewalk sales

College Town

Shepherd Road developed from Dougall through to Rutland

Precinct four-story, small rental units—Ethnic restaurant, small independent retailers at grade—U.B.C. classroom functions at grade

U.B.C. possible developer

Pocket parks—Close proximity to town centre

Four Corners

Gateway function—8- to 12- story office complex—Business, retail and institutional—Highway 33 street frontage—"business as usual"

D. Transportation

Transit Exchange—NW corner of Highway 33 and Dougall Road—Off-street Exchange—Proximity to town centre and college town—in combination with escarpment—good visibility

Parking/Other

Park 'n ride?

Demonstration parking, i.e. electric cars

Promote care sharing/community bikes

Reduce parking standards

E. Environment/Escarpment

Landscape on the escarpment—Possible land bridge across Highway 33

Greenspace/Pathways

Pedestrian-friendly, i.e. sidewalks

Connections to existing parking

Tertiary system of community paths

- to existing green space
- residential enclave connections to Town Centre, Transit Centre—Reinforce the orchard heritage of valley

Possible community garden at Roxby Exchange site

Sustainability

Demonstration Orchard in ALR

Community Gardens—currently one at Hartmann; community garden at Roxby Exchange

Explore solar energy as predominant heat source; geothermal heating—"Centre for Sustainability" in current lumber yard

Implementation

Negotiate with U.B.C. to determine interest in developing "off-campus"—Determine "first-in" incentives for developers, i.e. increased density, municipal tax "holiday"

Develop preferred plan both in graphics and narrative to build community support

Bus Exchange Alternatives	Evaluation Criteria								
	Bus Travel Time	Ease of Bus Transfer	Road Capacity Impacts	Driveway Impacts	Cost (e.g., Road Construction)	Pedestrian / Vehicle Conflicts	Handicap Access	Land Acquisition	Overall
Roxby Alternatives									
Roxby On-street	Good	Poor	Average	Good	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Average
Roxby On-street / Off-street Combined	Average	Average	Average	Good	Average	Average	Good	Average	Good
Roxby Off-Street	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Average	Average
Dougall Alternatives									
On-street (Highway 33)	Good	Poor[1]	Poor[2]	Poor[3]	Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Poor
On-street (Dougall)	Good	Average	Average	Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Poor	Average
Overpass/Highway 33	Good	Poor	Poor	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Poor
Shepherd Alternatives									
Side Platform	Average	Average	Good	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Average	Good
Island Platform	Average	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Poor	Good

[1] Overpass would provide grade separated cross street but transfer but will be extra walk time

[2] Driveway can be avoided by moving bus stop west, but results in steep grades on station platform

[3] Road capacity impacts can be somewhat mitigated by constructing bus bay

Figure D: Transit Exchange Alternatives Evaluation Summary

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Each team presented different approaches to transit stop and neighbourhood centre locations and development. Two (Blue and Green) maintained the highway and located a high street north of it (in different locations). The Orange team suggested a tunnel for through traffic under the existing highway, allowing it to become the high street.

POST-WORKSHOP

The City and the IBI group assessed the various alternatives suggested by the workshop to arrive at the preferred option for the transit centre (see figure D above)

Following the transit centre site identification the consultant team proceeded to develop a schematic plan for the transit centre and the immediate planning precinct. (See figure E below)

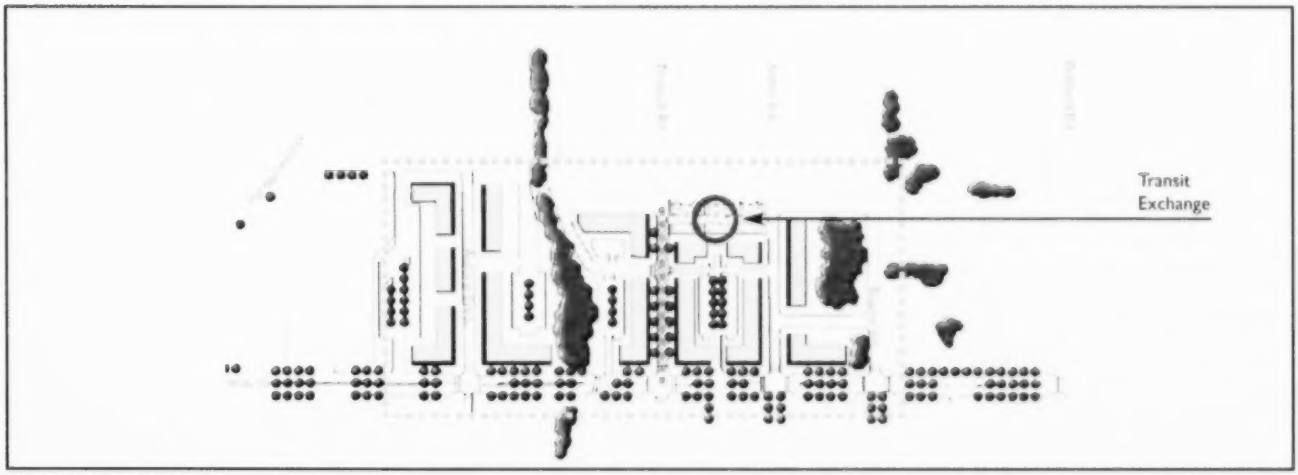

Figure E: Final (IBI) Scheme

A full report describing the workshop rationale, preparation, format, output and conclusions as well as the post-workshop work and the rationale for the final decision was prepared by the IBI group and posted on the City website.

CONCLUSION

The value of the workshop's effectiveness became readily apparent when the consultant team (IBI Group) was asked to recommend a preferred site for the exchange. By taking a broad brush approach to community analysis and development during the workshop the team was able, post-workshop, to efficiently sift through the various combinations offered and arrive at a short-term decision which would still facilitate a long-term plan.

Thus the workshop fulfilled its two mandates:

1) it defined the heart of the envisioned Rutland Transit Village and

2) it started the conversation which allowed the Kelowna Transit Department to immediately identify a location for the Rutland Transit Exchange.

By facilitating the short term decision within the context of a longer term vision the workshop has created an opportunity for a comprehensive, fully integrated planning and design process for this area without slowing the planning process. The City, together with an internal or external multi-disciplinary team could now proceed to explore energy production and usage, waste and water treatment and management, ecological system regeneration, green building design options etc. as they might apply to sustain this transit oriented solution indefinitely.

PARTICIPANTS

Orange Team

Sandra Marshall, CMHC – Facilitator, Architect

Valerie Broman, CO Parent Advisory – Stakeholder

Shauna Burnell, RBA – Business

Lance Jakubec, CMHC – Agency Rep

Patrick McCormick, CoK, Architect/Planner

Andy McNally, IBI, Transportation Planner

David Shipclark, CoK – Real Estate

Grant Wheeler, RBA – Business

Louise Corbiel, Note Taker

Blue Team

Doug Pollard, CMHC – Facilitator, Architect

Stuart Jones, IBI – Landscape Architect

Gary Stephen, CoK – Planner

Ron Westlake, CoK – Transportation Engineer

Steve Shoranick, MKS Resources – Developer

John Vielvoyne, RRA – Community Rep

C.W. Chang, RBA – Business Rep

Rolly Cacchioni, CoK APC – Government

Arlene Pilgrim, B.C. Paraplegics Stakeholder

Mike Docherty, Far West Transit – Transit Operator

Kirsten Harty – Note Taker

Green Team

Gary Andrishak, IBI – Facilitator, Transportation Planner

Jim Cooke – Engineer (Retired)

Aaron Knorr, IBI – Architecture Student

Tina Horning, RRA – Community Rep

Grant Rice – Bicycle Coalition

John Grant, CoK – Real Estate

Mark Stober – Developer

Brian Eames, CMHC Transportation Researcher, Architect

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Lana Sheehan, Note Taker

CMHC Project Manager: Doug Pollard

Consultant: IBI Group

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